AVATAR

The Last Airbender

Show #301

BOOK THREE: FIRE
CHAPTER ONE: "The Awakening"

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ACT ONE

INT. FIRE NATION SHIP - BEDROOM - NIGHT

We start very close on AANG's face as he sleeps. So close, in fact, that only when we slowly widen do we reveal that he has grown HAIR. Still groggy and dizzy, Aang comes to -- his eyes flitting awake.

AANG
(WEAK MOAN)

As he sits up in the bed, he notices he's all bandaged up -- and he also feels the aching pain and soreness of his injuries.

AANG (cont'd)
(WINCES) What happened...?

He looks around, and sees the familiar metal craftsmanship -- he's on a Fire Nation warship. (In fact, it is the same class of ship Zuko had during season one, and Aang is waking up in the room that would have been Zuko's bedroom.) It really hits him when he sees a Fire Nation INSIGNIA.

AANG (cont'd)
Oh no!

Aang spots his staff propped up against the wall, and grabs it, heading for the door. He carefully PEEKS out...

INT. FIRE NATION SHIP - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The coast is clear, and Aang makes his way out into the hall. He quickly but stealthily starts to make his escape, but as he turns a corner he sees two FIRE NATION GUARDS, one a hulking giant and the other quite diminutive. Just as they turn to look, Aang DUCKS back around the corner, trying to keep still and quiet against the wall. He grasps his bandaged torso, clearly still in pain.

HULKING GUARD (O.S., TO OTHER GUARD)
You hear something?

They walk down the hall to investigate the sounds. Just as they reach Aang, he tries to BLAST them back with Airbending, but he is so injured he can only muster a WEAK BREEZE.

HULKING GUARD (cont'd)
He's awake!

For an instant Aang sees the faces of PIPSQUEAK and THE DUKE, but he has already turned around and fled the other way.

PIPSQUEAK
Stop, wait!

As Aang frantically makes his way through the halls, we see how weakened he is -- in his romp through the familiar looking halls, he is not the nimble corkscrew running Airbender he was fleeing the Fire Nation guards in episode 1.02.

EXT. FIRE NATION SHIP - ON DECK - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Aang makes his way up onto the deck, where there are a few more Fire Nation soldiers. He quickly spots a soldier who is kneeling down FEEDING MOMO!

AANG
Momo?

Momo springs toward Aang, as the kneeling soldier looks up -- could it be BATO? When Momo catches up with him, Aang turns and opens his glider to take off...

TOPH (O.S.)
Twinkletoes, that's got to be you!

Aang turns to see TOPH -- and KATARA, both dressed in Fire Nation garb.

KATARA
Aang, you're awake!

AANG
Are you sure?
(rubbing his eyes)
I feel like I'm dreaming...

KATARA
You're not dreaming... you're finally awake.

Aang looks confused and unsure... a "Firebender" removes his helmet to reveal it's SOKKA.

SOKKA
Aang! Good to see you back with the living, buddy.

AANG
Sokka?

Aang's head starts SPINNING...

AANG (cont'd)
(WOOZY SOUND)

TOPH
(realizing)
Uh-oh, somebody catch him he's going to--

Aang FAINTS, and Katara catches him.

EXT. AZULA'S SHIP - ON DECK - NIGHT

The sleek, richly appointed Fire Nation royal sloop we remember from the beginning of season two. PRINCE ZUKO stands alone near the edge of the deck, deep in thought, looking out over the ocean. It's so quiet -- just the sounds of waves, water, and night.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Aren't you cold?

Zuko turns to see MAI, wearing a heavy robe, but still SHIVERING a bit in the cool night air.

ZUKO
I've got a lot on my mind. It's been so long -- over three years -- since I was home. I wonder what's changed. I wonder how I've changed.

MAI
(yawning)
I just asked if you were cold, I didn't ask for your whole life story.

Zuko looks away, maybe mildly hurt by her joke. She softens, and touches him reassuringly.

MAI (cont'd)
Stop worrying.

She leans in and gives him a comforting KISS. Then she turns and goes back inside, leaving Zuko alone with his thoughts.

EXT. FIRE NATION SHIP - ON DECK -- LATER

It's a bit later, and now it's quiet on deck here too -- the same sounds of waves, water, and night. Aang and Katara sit and catch up. Aang seems stressed out.

AANG
Why are we on a Fire Nation ship? Why is everyone dressed this way? And why am I the only one who's completely out of it?!

KATARA
(calming him)
You need to take it easy, okay? You got hurt pretty bad...

Aang calms down. Katara smiles.

KATARA (cont'd)
I like your hair...

Aang freaks out again.

AANG
I have hair?!

Aang feels the hair on his head. He can't believe it.

AANG (cont'd)
How long was I out?

KATARA
A few weeks.

Just then Hakoda comes up to them.

HAKODA
Everything okay?

KATARA
(a little dismissive)
We're fine, Dad.

HAKODA
(to Aang)
I'm Hakoda, Katara and Sokka's father.

KATARA
He knows who you are, I just called you "Dad", didn't I?

HAKODA
I guess you're right.

AANG
Nice to officially meet you, Chief Hakoda.

HAKODA
It's an honor to meet you.

KATARA
Great great, now you guys have finally met, so would you mind giving us a little privacy?

HAKODA
Of course.

Hakoda leaves, feeling a little hurt.

AANG
Are you mad at your dad or something?

KATARA
What? Not at all, why would you say that?

Aang SHRUGS. Katara looks at her father, now standing off by himself on another part of the deck. Aang holds his side uncomfortably.

KATARA (cont'd)
Maybe we should go upstairs... you need a healing session.

INT. FIRE NATION SHIP - BEDROOM

Aang lies on the bed, with part of his wound uncovered. Katara bends water around it.

KATARA
Tell me where your pain feels most intense.

AANG
A little higher...

She does, and as he WINCES.

FLASHBACK

Aang has a memory of himself emerging from the crystal cocoon in episode 2.20, entering the Avatar state.

BACK TO SCENE

AANG
Wow, you're definitely in the right area there.

KATARA
I can feel a lot of energy twisted up around there. Let me just see if I can...

Katara moves the water again over the area that triggered the last flashback. This time, she REALLY hits the right area...

FLASHBACK

Aang rising up, then being shot by Azula! Then everything just goes BLACK for a few seconds. There's a white light at the end of the tunnel... it gets closer and becomes (from Aang's POV) the fuzzy image of Katara above him, healing him as they fled Ba Sing Se on Appa...

BACK TO SCENE

We come back to the present on the same shot (from Aang's POV) of Katara healing him now. Aang struggles and sits upright -- he's tense.

AANG
(realizing)
I went down. I didn't just get hurt, did I? It was worse than that -- I was gone. But you brought me back!

KATARA
I just used the spirit water from the North pole. I don't know what I did exactly.

AANG
You saved me.

Katara strokes his hair to soothe him, and eases him back to lying down.

KATARA
You need to rest.

EXT. FIRE NATION - GRAND ROYAL PLAZA - DAY

A massive, outdoor space with impressive government buildings, statues, etc. -- Leni Riefenstahl could not have found a better location for a spirited rally. (Could be adjacent to the waterfront if we want to see Azula's ship.)

At the top of the steps of the main building, LO and LI address the huge CROWD from the grand stage.

(Note: we could intercut shots from 2.20 with the narration of those events, or if we are worried about flashback overload we could only flash back when we get to the new stuff.)

LO
Your princess Azula, clever and beautiful...

LI
Disguised herself as the enemy, and entered the Earth Kingdom's capital.

LI (cont'd)
In Ba Sing Se, she found her brother Zuko...

LO
And together they faced the Avatar.

LO AND LI
And the Avatar fell. And the Earth Kingdom fell!

FLASHBACK

Now Lo and Li's narration becomes voice-over, as we see some "new" flashbacks of what happened.

LO (V.O.)
Azula's agents quickly overtook the entire city.

We see Dai Li agents in action at various locations.

LI (V.O.)
They went to Ba Sing Se's great walls...

LO AND LI (V.O.)
And brought them down.

We see Dai Li agents Earthbending wide openings in the walls (or making other Earthbenders do so).

LO (V.O.)
The armies of the Fire Nation surged through the wall and swarmed over Ba Sing Se... securing our victory.

We see thousands of Fire Nation soldiers waiting outside the walls flow through openings made by the Dai Li.

We see images of the Fire Nation troops, tanks, and rhinos, swarming over Ba Sing Se, marching in and taking control -- like the familiar images of the Nazis taking Paris. The last flashback shot we see is a memorable WIDE SHOT of the city, with scattered fires and smoke rising up...

BACK TO SCENE

LO AND LI
Now the heroes have returned home.

LO
Your princess... Azula!

AZULA steps out on the stage, presented the crowd.

CROWD
(LOUD CHEERS)

LI
And after three long years...

LO
Your prince has returned...

LO AND LI
Zuko!

Now Zuko steps forward, and the crowd goes crazy!

CROWD
(DEAFENING ROAR)

It's a truly glorious welcome.

EXT. FIRE NATION SHIP - ON DECK - DAY

A small group has gathered on the deck, as Sokka catches Aang up on what's happened since he's been out of it.

SOKKA
After what happened in Ba Sing Se,
we had to get you to safety.

FLASHBACK

We start on the same WIDE SHOT of the city that we left off the last flashback, only a few days earlier -- and this time we see the wide shot is also the point of view from aboard Appa, as the gang flees the city.

SOKKA (V.O.) (cont'd)
We flew back to Chameleon Bay, where we found my father and the other Water Tribe men. The Earth King decided he wanted to travel the world in disguise, so he set off alone -- well, not completely alone.

We see the group joining up with Hakoda and the Water Tribe men, still with their original ships. We see the Earth King, wearing the costume of a pauper, bow and part ways... along with Bosco the bear, also in disguise.

SOKKA (V.O.) (cont'd)
Soon the bay was overrun with Fire Nation ships. Rather than fight them all, we captured a single ship -- and made it our disguise.

Water Tribe boats surround the ship they are on now -- and capture it using "tangle mines". Then we see them disentangling it, boarding it, and wearing their new Fire Nation outfits.

BACK TO SCENE

Sokka now uses a map of the world to illustrate to Aang the geography of what he's talking about.

SOKKA
Since then, we've been travelling West. We crossed through the Serpent's Pass a few days ago. We've seen a few Fire Nation ships, but none have bothered us.

AANG
So what now?

HAKODA
We've been working on a modified version of the invasion plan--

KATARA
It's Sokka's invasion plan.

HAKODA
Yes, Sokka's plan. We won't be able to mount a massive invasion without the Earth King's armies. But the solar eclipse will still leave the Fire Nation vulnerable.

SOKKA
So we're planning a smaller invasion -- just a rag-tag team of our friends and allies from around the Earth Kingdom. We already ran into Pipsqueak and the Duke.

PIPSQUEAK
Good to see you again, Aang.

SOKKA
And the best part is the eclipse isn't even our biggest advantage. We have a secret... You.

AANG
Me?

SOKKA
Yup. The whole world thinks you're dead -- isn't that great?!

Off of Aang's horrified look...

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. FIRE NATION SHIP - ON DECK - DAY

Aang is very upset.

AANG
The world thinks I'm dead? How is that good news -- that's terrible!

SOKKA
No, it's great. It means the Fire Nation won't be hunting us anymore. And even better, they won't be expecting you on the Day of Black Sun!

Aang clutches his head he is so overwhelmed.

AANG
No, no, no -- you have no idea -- this is so messed up!

Just then, BRRRROOOOOOOHHHHH!! They are interrupted by the sound of a SHIP'S HORN. Everyone turns to see a Fire Navy Battleship approaching. Aang whips opens up his glider.

AANG (cont'd)
I'll handle this -- the Avatar is back!

KATARA
Aang, wait. Remember they don't know we're not Fire Nation.

Aang realizes she's right.

HAKODA
Everyone just stay calm. Bato and I will take care of this.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIRE NATION SHIP - ON DECK - MINUTES LATER

Almost everyone is below deck now, including Sokka and Katara. Appa is covered with a TARP, under which Aang, Toph, and Momo are hiding.

AANG
(whispers)
I hate not being able to do anything.

TOPH
(whispers)
Hopefully you won't need to.

The battleship pulls up alongside, and lowers a boarding ramp. A FIRE NAVY OFFICER and two FIRE NAVY SOLDIERS come down the ramp, where they are greeted by Hakoda and Bato, who are dressed as the officers of this ship. Hakoda salutes (or bows) in the appropriate manner.

FIRE NAVY OFFICER
(to Hakoda)
Commander, why are you off course? All Western fleet ships are supposed to be moving toward Ba Sing Se to support the occupation.

HAKODA
Actually... we're from the Eastern fleet. We have orders to deliver some cargo.

FIRE NAVY OFFICER
Ah, Eastern fleet. Well, nice of Admiral Chan to let us know he was sending one of his ships our way.

BATO
I'm sure Admiral Chan meant no disrespect, sir.

FIRE NAVY OFFICER
I mean, how hard is it to write a quick note and send a hawk our way?

HAKODA
Next time we'll send two hawks to be sure you get the message.

The officer salutes/bows, and turns to leave, followed by the two soldiers. Hakoda and Bato go about their business.

FIRE NAVY SOLDIER
Sir, Admiral Chan has been on leave for two months at Ember Island.

FIRE NAVY OFFICER
What? Why doesn't anyone ever tell me anything?

FIRE NAVY SOLDIER
(sotto)
Something's not right -- they should've known that. I think this is a captured ship.

ANGLE ON: Toph, whose hearing is acute enough to hear them.

FIRE NAVY OFFICER
(sotto)
Just stay quiet until we're safely across the ramp... then we'll sink this ship.

As the men turn and begin crossing the ramp, Toph leaps out from under the tarp.

TOPH
They know!

Bato thinks fast, knocking off the ramp attachment and causing the men to fall into the water.

Katara appears on deck, and does a Waterbending move to PUSH OFF the other ship, and start them moving away. The crew aboard the battleship focus their efforts on rescuing their men overboard. Once they are aboard, the other ship begins firing artillery (NOTE: Mike has an idea for this) at the kids' fleeing ship.

EXT. TURTLEDUCK POND - DAY

This is the same duck pond we saw in 2.07. Zuko sits watching the turtle-ducks, occasionally tossing them scraps of bread which they happily dart for. Suddenly, for no apparent reason, the turtle ducks flee the other direction...

TURTLEDUCKS
(FRANTIC QUACKING)

We reveal Azula has arrived.

AZULA
You seem so downcast... has Mai gotten to you already?
(beat)
Though actually, Mai has been in a strangely good mood lately.

ZUKO
I haven't seen Dad yet. I haven't seen him in three years -- since I was banished.

AZULA
So what?

ZUKO
So... I didn't capture the Avatar.

AZULA
Who cares? The Avatar's dead.

Zuko looks away as if he knows something.

AZULA (cont'd)
Unless you think he somehow miraculously survived?

Zuko has a brief **FLASHBACK** of Katara in 2.20:

KATARA (FROM 2.20)
This is water from the spirit oasis at the North pole -- it has special properties so I've been saving it for something important...

BACK TO SCENE

ZUKO
No -- there's no way he could have survived.

Azula looks deep into Zuko's eyes, scrutinizing his answer -- she narrows her eyes (because she knows he's lying) but she doesn't call him on it.

AZULA
Well, then I'm sure you have nothing to worry about.

EXT. WESTERN LAKE -- DAY

As the kids' stolen ship attempts to flee the Fire Navy battleship, it's turned into a battle reminiscent of the movie "Master and Commander."

The battleship loads and launches fiery loads from its trebuchets, and fires its other artillery as well. Meanwhile, aboard the kids' ship, they've improvised an artillery weapon. Toph stands on a rotating metal platform -- Pipsqueak lifts boulders from a pile and places them in front of Toph, who then Earthbends the projectiles with great force at the other ship. (Possibly The Duke is in charge of rotating the platform, to aim the "Toph Gun" -- whatever mechanics seem to work best and/or be the funniest.) After Toph fires a shot...

TOPH
Load the Toph!

Pipsqueak reloads, the Duke aims, and she FIRES again.

KATARA
I'm going to give us some cover!

Katara starts to Waterbend DENSE FOG up out of the surrounding seawater. As their ship enters the fog, we only hear the trebuchet and cannon fire, and see occasional brief flashes in the distance.

Suddenly a fiery blast ROCKS their ship!

AANG
I can't just stand by and do nothing!

Aang opens his glider, but before he takes off Sokka GRABS him and stops him.

SOKKA
Aang, no! You're still hurt... and you have to stay secret. Just let us handle this.

AANG
Fine.

Aang JERKS his glider away from Sokka's grasp, and sulks away as the battle continues on without him.

Things start to go worse for the kids' ship in the battle. Toph and Pipsqueak run out of boulders. And while Katara is busy battling fires that have started on the ship, the fog begins to dissipate... and we see the battleship is getting very close. Toph checks in with Sokka.

TOPH
How we doin'?

SOKKA
Things couldn't get much worse...

On cue, the SERPENT (from 2.12) rises out of the water.

SERPENT
(FEROCIOUS SERPENTY ROAR)

SOKKA
The universe just loves proving me wrong, doesn't it?

TOPH
You make it too easy.

Just as the serpent LUNGES and SNAPS at Sokka -- BOOM! It's hit by a fiery trebuchet bomb from the other ship, and stops just short of biting Sokka in two...

SERPENT
("Huh?")

The serpent now turns its attention to the Fire Navy battleship, racing toward it with incredible speed...

SOKKA
Thank you, the universe!

As the battleship scrambles and occupies itself with the serpent, the kids' ship is able to make a getaway...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PORT - SUNDOWN

The kids' ship docks at the same port the pirate ship was docked in episode 1.09, on the West Coast of the Earth Kingdom. (NOTE: It's okay if it's not immediately recognizable, this is mostly for our reference.)

INT. FIRE NATION SHIP - BEDROOM - THAT MOMENT

Aang is lying alone in bed, looking up at the ceiling, when Sokka, Katara, and Toph come down to get him.

TOPH
Hey Aang -- we're going into town to find some dinner.

AANG
Well... I am pretty hungry. Maybe dinner's a good idea.

Aang sits up on the side of his bed, ready to join them. Sokka hands him a HEADBAND.

SOKKA
Here, tie this around your head -- it'll cover your arrow.

Aang lies back down.

AANG
I'm not going out if I can't wear my arrow proudly.

SOKKA
Aang, come on -- be practical.

Aang turns away from them in bed.

KATARA
You guys go ahead without us.
We'll catch up with you.

Sokka shrugs, and he and Toph leave. Katara sits on the bed next to Aang.

KATARA (cont'd)
I think I understand why being a secret bothers you so much. You don't want people to think you failed.

AANG
You're right, I don't. But the problem is... I did fail.

KATARA
Aang, that's not true.

AANG
It is true. I was in Ba Sing Se -- I was there -- but I lost. And now the Earth Kingdom has fallen for good!

KATARA
It's not for good. Remember there's still a plan... the invasion.

AANG
And I hate the invasion plan, too! I don't want you or anyone else risking your lives to fix my mistakes... I've always known that I would have to face the Firelord... but now I know I need to do it alone.

KATARA
Aang...

AANG
Katara, please, just go. Please.

Katara nods. She sees he's in pain and needs some time to himself. She gets up to leave. As she reaches the doorway, she turns back.

KATARA
Is there anything you need?

In a moment of Zuko like clarity and purposefulness -- and maybe even using a Zuko-style close-up.

AANG
I need to redeem myself... I need my honor back.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FIRELORD'S PALACE - NIGHT

Zuko. Reveal he's in a long empty hallway in the palace. He walks slowly, and we hear his footsteps. He pauses in the vestibule just outside the throne room.

ZUKO
(DEEP BREATH)

He looks into the throne room, and we see the familiar backdrop of the roaring flames and the silhouette of his father in the distance. Zuko resolves himself, and enters...

INT. FIRE NATION SHIP - BEDROOM - LATER

Katara comes back in.

KATARA
I brought you some food--

But she sees his bed is empty -- and his glider's gone too.

KATARA (cont'd)
Oh no...

EXT. OCEAN - THAT MOMENT

Aang, though clearly weak and exhausted, flies solo on his glider over the ocean.

INT. FIRELORD'S THRONE ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Zuko kneels before his father. He does not look up at him -- and we only see the Firelord's silhouette and the usual shots that hide his face. For a long beat, we listen to the ROARING FIRE -- Zuko must be feeling the heat. Then, finally...

FIRELORD
You have been away for a long time. I can see the weight of your travels has changed you.

The Firelord stands up (and possibly approaches Zuko).

FIRELORD (cont'd)
You have redeemed yourself, my son.

The weight LIFTS... as Zuko looks up into his father's face, we all see the FIRELORD'S FACE for the first time -- he looks like an older Zuko, without the scar.

FIRELORD (cont'd)
Welcome home.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Aang is obviously exhausted, and his injuries are bothering him... but he fights and flies on.

EXT. FIRE NATION SHIP - ON DECK - NIGHT

Katara finds Hakoda and Bato on deck. It's clear from the look in Katara's eyes that she needs to talk.

BATO
I'll leave you two alone.

Hakoda nods "thanks", and Bato walks off.

HAKODA
What's wrong, Katara?

KATARA
He left.

HAKODA
What?

KATARA
Aang... he just took his glider and disappeared. He has this ridiculous notion that he has to save the world alone -- that it's all his responsibility.

HAKODA
Maybe that's his way of being brave.

This triggers something in Katara, and she BLOWS UP at her dad.

KATARA
It's not brave, it's selfish and stupid! We could be helping him. And I know the world needs him, but doesn't he know how much we need him too? How could he just leave us behind?!

A long beat as the meaning of this sinks in for Hakoda. He looks down... feeling a great burden of guilt.

HAKODA
You're talking about me too, aren't you?

Katara realizes she is... and the TEARS start coming.

KATARA
How could you leave us, Dad? I know we had Gran-gran, and she loved us, but we were just so lost without you.

He hugs her, as she SOBS.

HAKODA
I'm so sorry, Katara.

KATARA
I understand why you left... I really do, and I know you had to go. So why do I still feel this way? I'm so sad and angry... and hurt.

HAKODA
I love you more than anything. You and your brother are my entire world. I thought about you every day I was gone. And every night when I went to sleep, I would lie awake missing you so much it would ache.

INT. FIRELORD'S THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

Meanwhile, in another emotional moment between father and child, the Firelord addresses Zuko.

FIRELORD
I am proud of you, Prince Zuko. I am proud because you and your sister conquered Ba Sing Se.

Zuko beams with happiness.

FIRELORD (cont'd)
I am proud because when your loyalty was tested -- by your treacherous Uncle -- you did the right thing and captured the traitor.

Here Zuko's expression shows a twinge of something -- it's not a complete turn, but Zuko himself is not fully proud of what he did regarding his Uncle.

FIRELORD (cont'd)
And I am proudest of all of your most legendary accomplishment -- you slayed the Avatar.

Zuko FLINCHES -- what happened? Why does his father think HE killed the Avatar?

ZUKO
What did you hear?

FIRELORD
Azula told me everything. She said she was amazed and impressed with your power and ferocity at the moment of truth.

But Zuko doesn't correct his father -- he just BOWS down.

EXT. OCEAN NIGHT

As Aang flies high above the ocean, he approaches the long NAVAL BLOCKADE that we saw in episode 1.08.

AANG
The blockade...

Not wanting to risk being seen, Aang DIVES into the water, using all his energy to form an air bubble and SURGE through the water like a torpedo. He emerges from the water on the other side of the blockade, but finds he is now too tired to fly on his glider. He TREADS water...

AANG (cont'd)
(GASPING, CATCHING HIS BREATH)

Aang notices a piece of DRIFTWOOD nearby, and he swims to it. At first he holds on to stay afloat -- then he gets an idea. He climbs onto the driftwood, carefully balancing on it. Then he opens up his glider as a makeshift sail, and WINDSURFS across the waves and over the ocean...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OCEAN - LATER

A bit later, it's raining now, and we can hear LOUD WIND and the waves have gotten very CHOPPY. Aang still windsurfs, but it's almost as if each rising wave might be the one that takes him out. There's a LIGHTNING FLASH. We see a big dark wave coming -- Aang braces himself -- and makes it over. □

AANG
(RELIEVED SOUND)

But just then, a big GUST of wind blows his glider from his hands--

AANG (cont'd)
Nooo!!

As Aang LUNGES for his glider to try and catch it, he tumbles off the driftwood and into the dark water...

INT. AZULA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zuko enters. Azula is asleep, her eyes closed.

ZUKO
Why did you do it?

She answers without opening her eyes, though she smiles wryly.

AZULA
You're going to have to be a little more specific.

ZUKO
Why did you tell father that I was the one who killed the Avatar?!

AZULA
Can't this wait until morning?

ZUKO
It can't.

AZULA
(SIGHS) Fine.

She sits up in bed.

AZULA (cont'd)
You seemed so worried about how father would treat you because you hadn't captured the Avatar -- I figured if I gave you the credit, you'd have nothing to worry about.

ZUKO
But why?

AZULA
Call it a generous gesture. I wanted to thank you for your help... and I was happy to share the glory.

ZUKO
You're lying.

AZULA
(shrugs)
If you say so.

ZUKO
You have another motive for doing this -- I just haven't figured out what it is.

AZULA
Please, Zuko... what ulterior motive could I have? What could I possibly gain by letting you get all the glory for defeating the Avatar?

She lies back down in bed, and gets under the covers.

AZULA (cont'd)
Unless somehow the Avatar was actually alive -- all that glory would suddenly turn to shame and foolishness.
(beat)
But you said yourself that was impossible...

Zuko's eyes widen as he realizes the meaning of all of this. Azula closes her eyes.

AZULA (cont'd)
Sleep well, Zu-Zu.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Aang hangs on to the driftwood, and sees his glider floating about ten feet away. He reaches for it, and tries to swim for it, but with each UP and DOWN of the swelling waves, the glider floats further and further away. Aang gives up, and CLINGS to the driftwood.

AANG
I'm not going to make it... I've failed.

Suddenly, ROKU appears to Aang in a vision, standing on the water near him.

AANG (cont'd)
Roku?

ROKU
You haven't failed, Aang.

AANG
But everyone thinks I'm dead again... they think I've abandoned them. And I'm losing this war -- I'm letting the whole world down.

ROKU
If anyone is to blame for the state of the world, it is me. I should have seen this war coming, and prevented it. You inherited my problems, and my mistakes. But I believe you are destined to redeem me, and save the world.

AANG
I don't know...

Aang closes his eyes.

YUE (O.S.)
You already saved the world.

As Aang looks at the bright, full moon, he sees YUE'S SPIRIT fade in.

YUE (cont'd)
And you'll save the world again... but you can't give up.

AANG
You're right.
(with new determination)
I won't give up.

With great EFFORT, Aang starts to push himself with a wave he creates with Waterbending... then Yue seems to REACH OUT to Aang... her hands DIP into the water near him, and PUSH -- creating a massive tidal force that sends Aang and his driftwood riding at great speed.

EXT. CRESCENT ISLAND - BEACH - LATER

This is the island from episode 1.08. We see Aang wash up on the beach, still holding the driftwood. The waves retreat, leaving him safely in the black volcanic sand.

EXT. CRESCENT ISLAND - BEACH - SUNRISE

As the sun rises, we see Appa land nearby on the beach. The kids climb off and rush over to Aang. Momo flies to Aang and LICKS his face, waking him. Katara catches up to him too.

KATARA
You're okay!

AANG
I have so much to do.

KATARA
I know. But you'll have our help.

TOPH
You didn't think you could get out of training just by coming to the Fire Nation, did you?

Aang smiles a little. He looks at Sokka.

AANG
What about the invasion?

SOKKA
We'll join up with my dad and the invasion force on the day of the eclipse.

Aang nods. Toph senses something washing up onto the shore.

TOPH
Hey, what's...

She picks it up -- it's pretty broken and mangled.

TOPH (cont'd)
Oh, it's your glider.

She hands it to Aang. He tries to open it, but we see it's basically destroyed.

AANG
That's okay. If someone saw it... it would give away my identity.
(MORE)

AANG (cont'd)
It's better for now that no one knows I'm alive.

He plants the staff in the sand -- it's a bit like a grave marker. Katara puts her hand on Aang's shoulder.

END OF SHOW